



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
Thursday, September 6, 2001

Bird Tests Positive for West Nile Virus

A dead crow found in the town of Irondequoit tested positive for West Nile virus, according to Monroe County health officials.

"Since we had a number of positive birds last year, we have anticipated finding a bird with West Nile virus this season. It serves as an important reminder to residents to be cautious until we have our first heavy frost, when most mosquitoes will die off," said Deputy Health Director Dr. Nancy M. Bennett.

To reduce risk of mosquito bites:

- Minimize outdoor activity between dusk and dawn
- Wear long-sleeved shirts and pants to cover exposed skin
- Use insect repellents containing DEET; follow instructions on bottle

Monroe County health officials have been engaged in a number of activities this season to reduce the risk of WNV, including:

- larviciding catch-basins to reduce the mosquito population in areas of Monroe County with higher concentrations of older people
- trapping and testing adult mosquitoes for WNV; none positive to date
- identifying mosquito species when in the larval stage of development
- tracking dead crows to determine if a pattern exists in Monroe County
- testing dead crows for WNV
- launching a media campaign to advise the public about personal protective measures against WNV and to drain standing water

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), very few mosquitoes – much less than 1% - carry WNV. If bitten by an infected mosquito, less than 1% of people become seriously ill; most people will have mild flu-like symptoms or exhibit no symptoms at all. People over the age of 50 and those with chronic illness are at highest-risk for WNV. Although there is no vaccine or specific treatment, if a person develops severe symptoms, such as high fever and headache, they should consult a doctor.

Residents may call **234-9600** for WNV information or to report a dead crow.

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For more information, contact:

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